



**Staffordshire & Black Country
Business Innovation Centre**

Equal Opportunities Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been adopted by Staffordshire & Black Country Business innovation Centre (“the Company”) in recognition that it has a moral and legal obligation to ensure equal opportunity at work for all its employees. The Company further recognises that the full utilisation of talent and ability, regardless of irrelevant discriminatory criteria, will ensure the best possible standards of service provision to customers/clients.
- 1.2 The implementation of an effective Equal Opportunities Policy requires the complete commitment of staff and management at all levels. This is not only to prevent overt acts of discrimination but also acts that may be unintentionally discriminatory. The aim of this policy is therefore to ensure, as far as possible, that there is no unlawful direct or indirect discrimination within the Company.
- 1.3 The Company also recognises that irrelevant discriminatory criteria should be no bar to access to its services.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Company is committed to operating an equal opportunities policy in carrying out its operations. The BIC will also encourage its clients to adopt Equal Opportunities (EO) good practice and to encourage the employment of disadvantaged groups, especially in new and growing industries.
- 2.2 The BIC will ensure that no person applying for a job, or employed to do a job, will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their race, colour ethnic or national origin; or because of their religion, sex, age or physical disability. The BIC will encourage its clients to adopt and fulfil a similar policy.

- 2.3 Any employee found to be discriminating or using unacceptable behaviour (i.e. harassment or victimisation) against another person or group of persons will face serious disciplinary action.
- 2.4 Any person with a complaint against another, on the grounds of discrimination, victimisation or harassment, should inform their line manager (or senior manager if more appropriate), and the case will be thoroughly investigated by the senior executives of the company. Any employee found to be contravening the policies laid down, will face severe disciplinary action.
- 2.5 The BIC's EO policy is an integral part of the Induction Process, which all new staff undertakes immediately on employment. All employees will be given equal opportunity and facilities and, where appropriate, training to enable them to progress within the organisation.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 The Company's responsibilities

- 3.1.1 The Company has the primary legal and moral responsibility for ensuring that it and its employees do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race or disability.
- 3.1.2 The Company will not only ensure that its Equal Opportunities Policy is effective but will seek to develop positive policies and attitudes to promote equal opportunities both in the way that it employs its staff and in the manner in which it allows its customers and clients access to its services.

3.2 The responsibilities of individual employees

Whilst the primary responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with the Company, individual employees also have certain responsibilities. They have duties to their employer and to their colleagues. Employees involved in discriminatory actions or practices may face serious disciplinary action. In particular individual employees should:-

- 3.2.1 co-operate with any measures introduced by the Company to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination;
- 3.2.2 not discriminate e.g. by adopting practices or attitudes which would place another in a less favourable position on account of their sex, race or disability;
- 3.2.3 not induce or attempt to induce other employees to practice unlawful discrimination;

- 3.2.4 not victimise or attempt to victimise individuals on the grounds that they have complained of or provided information about discrimination;
- 3.2.5 not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees on account of their sex, race or disability;
- 3.2.6 inform their immediate superior or another member of management if they suspect that discrimination is taking place;
- 3.2.7 inform their immediate superior or another member of management if they believe that they have a disability which makes it necessary for the Company to make reasonable adjustments to their working environment.

4 Scope of the Policy

The Company aims to maintain and extend a fair working environment for all employees throughout each stage of the employment relationship from advertising and recruitment through to retirement or dismissal.

5 Implementation of policy

- 5.1 Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Our selection procedures are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are appropriate for achieving our objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.
- 5.2 The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that whatever possible reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff participate fully in the workplace.
- 5.3 Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements, which are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.
- 5.4 In accordance with recommended practice the ethnic and gender composition of our staff and applicants for jobs will be monitored (on an anonymous basis) at all levels.

6 **Training and Review**

Training in equal opportunities may be provided to any employees involved in recruitment. This Policy will be monitored, and if necessary revised, by the Company in order to judge its effectiveness in promoting equal opportunity.